

Mrs. Busch, the Multi-Millionaire Brewer's Widow, a Woman without a Country



Mrs. Adolphus Anheuser-Busch, the Wealthy Widow Who Occupies So Unusual a Position

THE arrival in this country just a few weeks ago of Mrs. Adolphus Busch, the multi-millionaire widow, of St. Louis, who had been living in Germany for several years, has brought to light an interesting situation which, so far as there is any record, has never before actually existed in history. Although Mrs. Busch, whose husband was the famous brewer, Adolphus Busch, and who is herself the "Anheuser" of the widely known "Anheuser-Busch," is really the richest widow in the world, with more than sixty millions of dollars in money and properties, yet her return to the United States has revealed her as literally a "woman without a country."

It was not so many years ago that a great New England clergyman, Edward Everett Hale, created that classic, "The Man Without a Country." This book became famous throughout the world, for it made its readers realize for the first time just what a tragedy it would be for anyone to be without a flag; without the patriotic home ties of a nation which he could call his own; really without a home among all the peoples of the earth.

But no one thought such a thing could actually happen. It seemed too great a tragedy to occur to any one in real life. But the war has brought an almost similar situation to the rich Mrs. Busch, of St. Louis.

Technically, Mrs. Busch is a citizen of the United States. But part of her vast estate, though, is in Germany. She owns castles, villas, stocks and bonds and even part of a great ammunition plant in Prussia. So, when the United States declared war upon Germany the Prussian Government promptly declared Mrs. Busch, who was then living in the great Villa Lilly, near Berlin, an estate named after her and presented her by her husband as a golden wedding gift, to be an alien enemy of her husband's fatherland. All her fortune in Germany was seized by the Government. Even the jewels she kept in safety deposit vaults in German banks were taken and turned into the German war fund.

The Kaiser did not put Mrs. Busch in prison, or intern her, for she is more than seventy years old and, besides, her husband had been one of the Kaiser's closest friends. He explained, through his Ministers, that the seizure of her property was regrettable, but unavoidable, because if the Government made an exception in her case other American citizens who owned property in Germany would expect the same consideration.

Then Mrs. Busch wanted to return to America, where she had many more millions in business properties, residences and bonds. But it was a long time before the German Government would consent to her departure. It had to be arranged in a roundabout way with the State Department of this country, and that took much time. Mrs. Busch's personal attorney, Harry Hawes, of St. Louis, spent nine months in Switzerland completing negotiations for the passage of Mrs. Busch, even after both Governments had given their consent to her return to America.

And then, when the rich widow, whose family is one of the best known in the United States, arrived here she was promptly arrested and held in custody by this Government, while the Alien Enemy Property Custodian, A. Mitchell Palmer, issued orders that all Mrs. Busch's great American estate, totalling so many millions that even now its value can only be guessed at, be taken over by the United States on the grounds that Mrs. Busch was, in reality, a resident of Germany. Under the Custodian's ruling the complete title to all that Mrs. Busch owned in America passed, without condition, to the Government of the United States, to be sold, mortgaged, transferred, managed or appropriated just as the Government might see fit.

Everything She Owns in Germany Taken by the Kaiser and Her Great Breweries and Vast Properties in the United States Seized by the Government

In Germany, an enemy alien and citizen of the United States; in America, an enemy alien and citizen of Germany. Such must be the standing of the rich Mrs. Busch until one or the other of the Governments change its mind. No matter where she might go in all the world, no country would allow her to cross its borders, for none could give her a passport claiming her as a citizen. She is not a neutral, for the United States, in effect, say she belongs to Germany, and Germany has declared that she belongs to the United States. She could not even be naturalized in a neutral country and thus establish a new citizenship, for neither the United States nor Germany could be given by her as her fatherland.

Mrs. Busch has said that she considers herself an American citizen and wants always to be known as such. This definitely robs her of all her properties in Germany, for that declaration will always stand against her in Prussia. If the United States should not accept her protestations of loyalty to this country after awhile and give her back her great estates here, then Mrs. Busch will lose not only her nationality but her sixty millions of dollars as well.

Just a few years ago Mrs. Busch was in the habit of making donations both in Germany and the United States, sometimes as much as \$500,000 at a time.

Now Mrs. Busch must not even pay her grocer's bill without first getting the consent of the Government's custodian of her property after making a strict accounting for each dozen eggs and each loaf of bread. If she asks to spend more of her money than the Government thinks is advisable, or if she should wish to be extravagant, the Government custodian may say, "No; you must be economical!"

Of course, this Government knows what it is about. There are reasons for being very careful, in these dangerous times, about fully accepting Mrs. Busch's word that she is a loyal citizen of the United States. Adolphus Busch, her husband, was always known to be the most intimate friend the German Kaiser ever had. It is said that whenever the Kaiser, in his younger days, was hard pressed for cash, as he often used to be, he would send a telegram or a cablegram to his friend, the rich German-American, Herr Busch, and borrow as many thousands as he needed—and the report is that the brewer was never in a hurry to get his money back.

Adolphus Busch, the famous brewer, was one of a family of twenty-two brothers, all born in Mayence-on-the-Rhine. His ancestors had been brewers in Germany for many generations. He came to this country after education in the foremost schools of Europe, in 1857, and settled in St. Louis. His family announced he was being sent to this country to establish an American branch of the family and extend its business to the United States.

Mr. Busch enlisted in the Federal army during the Civil War and served with distinction. He established the Busch brewery in St. Louis and, when he married Miss Lilly Anheuser, daughter of the wealthy Anheuser family of that city, he named his beer and his brewery "Anheuser-Busch," in honor of his bride. There are few trade names in the world better known than "Anheuser-Busch."

What are the known facts about Mrs. Busch that make it different to draw up a balance either in favor of an American citizenship for her German citizenship?

Well—two of her daughters are married to officers in the German army. Clara is the wife of Major von Gontard, who also is the managing director of a German munitions plant which makes rifles. The Kaiser thought so much of Frau von Gontard that on January 27, 1914, his birthday, he made her husband a Prussian peer, and elevated him to the House of Lords. The Crown Prince and the Crown Princess personally conferred this honor in their father's name. The Crown Princess and Frau von Gontard had by that time become the closest friends, and it is said the two women are



The Great Busch Breweries in St. Louis, Largest in the World, Now Operated by the Government.

inseparable now, while both their husbands are away fighting Americans and Allies.

The other daughter married to a German officer is Wilstmine, whose husband is General Eduard Sharrer, of the Bavarian Army Corps. General Sharrer was a lieutenant when the war began, but won rapid promotion. Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria personally conferred a war cross upon General Sharrer two years ago.

Besides these two daughters, more than a score of Mrs. Busch's Prussian nephews and cousins are fighting in the German army. Before the United States entered the war her castle, at Bingen-on-the-Rhine, was the rendezvous of many German generals who were always welcome there when they could snatch a few hours from the front, and at Villa Lilly, on the outskirts of Berlin, society of the Prussian capital were constantly entertained in great gardens which had been laid out by an American landscape artist.

It is said by United States authorities that Mrs. Busch gave more than \$1,000,000 to German war hospitals before we entered the war, and bought many German war bonds. In this country \$400,000 worth of bonds of the Imperial German Government were purchased for Mrs. Busch while she still was in Germany, and at the same time her son, August Busch, purchased more for himself.

Just outside of St. Louis is a magnificent residence built by Adolphus Busch on the site of the old cabin home of General Grant. On "Millionaires' Row" in the city itself, there is another palatial home belonging to the rich widow. At Pasadena, Cal., the brewer laid out for his wife an immense estate, with a magnificent palace in the center, and at Cooperstown, N. Y., there is another residence. The Pasadena home is valued at \$3,000,000; Villa Lilly, in Berlin, cost \$3,750,000; the "Grant Park" home at St. Louis is valued at \$2,500,000; the Cooperstown Summer home and its estate cost \$2,000,000. These are the valuations made by the official appraiser.

In almost every one of these homes there is some memento of the Kaiser's friendship for Mr. and Mrs. Busch. In the Pasadena home there is a solid gold table service, plates, cups and saucers, great urns and platters, with a full chest of knives, forks, spoons, etc.—enough to serve for a large banquet, and on each piece is the coat-of-arms of the Hohenzollerns, with an inscription from Wilhelm II. to Mr. and Mrs. Busch in honor of their golden wedding.

At the St. Louis home, in "Millionaires' Row," there is a chest of medals conferred by the Kaiser upon Brewster Busch. One of these is the order of "The Red Eagle," and another is the "Order of Philip the Good." Either of these orders made Mr. Busch a Prussian Lord, and gives his widow the rank of a Peeress of Prussia. King Ludwig of Bavaria bestowed the title of Count upon the brewer, who was his close friend also, and thus Mrs. Busch has the right to be known as the Countess Lilly of Bavaria.

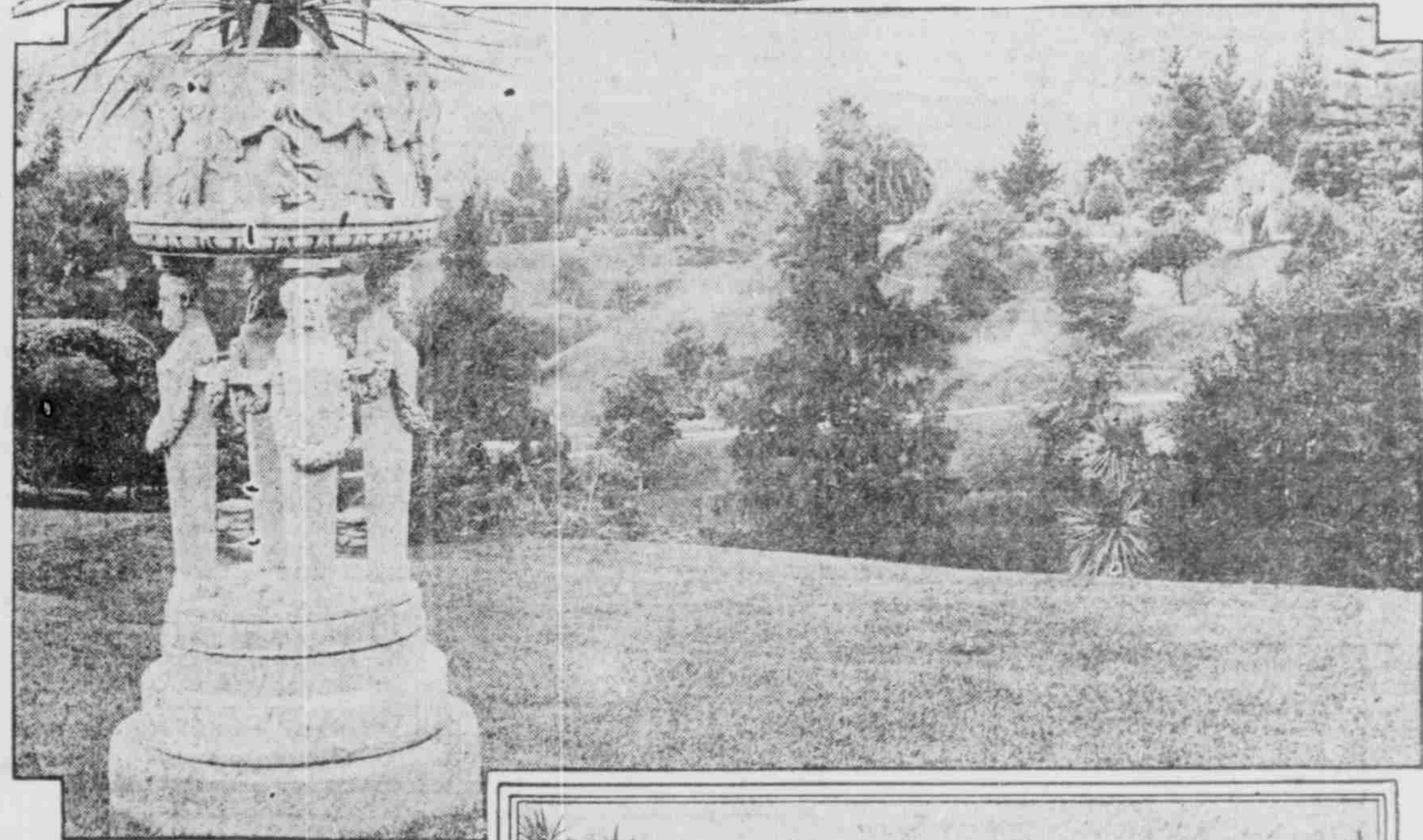
All these medals and presents from the Kaiser and other German Kings, including a bear's head sent to America as a birthday present for the brewer by the Grand Duke of Hesse, now are in the hands of the Alien Property Custodian.

Such is the score in favor of Mrs. Busch's loyalty to Germany.

But while she has two sons-in-law fighting for the Kaiser, she has two sons-in-law



PHOTO DAVIS & SANFORD.
Mrs. Hugo Reisinger, One of the Three Daughters of Mrs. Busch Now in This Country and Best Known, Perhaps, as the Mother-in-Law of "Baby McKee"—the White House Baby.



Scenes in the Magnificent Gardens of the Los Angeles Home of Mrs. Busch.

fighting for the Kaiser, she has two grandchildren, August and Adolphus 2d, who are in the service for this country. She has purchased \$4,000,000 worth of Liberty Bonds, and her donations to the Red Cross have reached into the millions. One of her grandsons, Kurt Reisinger, son of Mrs. Hugo Reisinger, Mrs. Busch's daughter, married the famous "Baby McKee," who was born in the White House while her grandfather, Benjamin Harrison, was President. Baby McKee's other name was Mary Lodge McKee, and certainly there is no more patriotic family in America than hers. Her mother-in-law, Mrs. Reisinger, though, has been summoned before Department of Justice officials several times for questioning. She knew Mme. Storch, and the presence of wireless outfit in her New York home gave some trouble until it was satisfactorily explained to the Government.

Former President Taft, former President Harrison, Colonel Roosevelt and many other prominent Americans were numbered among the closest friends of Mr. Busch. Mr. Taft was President when Mrs. Busch celebrated her golden wedding, and the President sent her a magnificent present with his most sincere felicitations.

Such is the evidence Mrs. Busch puts forward in her claim to a refuge in America. It is sufficient evidence to persuade the Government to give her complete liberty—but not enough to win for her the citizenship which would prevent the Alien Property Custodian from holding all her great estates as he holds the properties of all alien enemies.



The Busch Residence in Los Angeles, Now in Possession of the United States Government.

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